

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 646

To increase the nursing workforce.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 15, 2007

Mr. COLEMAN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To increase the nursing workforce.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Rural Nursing Pro-
5 motion Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF A NURSE DISTANCE EDU-**
7 **CATION PILOT PROGRAM.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and
9 Human Services, in conjunction with the Secretary of
10 Education, shall establish a Nurse Distance Education
11 Pilot Program through which grants may be awarded for

1 the conduct of activities to increase accessibility to nursing
2 education.

3 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Nurse Distance
4 Education Pilot Program established under subsection (a)
5 shall be to increase accessibility to nursing education to—

6 (1) provide assistance to individuals in rural
7 areas who want to study nursing to enable such indi-
8 viduals to receive appropriate nursing education;

9 (2) promote the study of nursing at all edu-
10 cational levels;

11 (3) establish additional slots for nursing stu-
12 dents at existing nursing education programs; and

13 (4) establish new nursing education programs
14 at institutions of higher education.

15 (c) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a grant
16 under the Pilot Program under subsection (a), an entity
17 shall submit to the Secretary of Health and Human Serv-
18 ices an application at such time, in such manner, and con-
19 taining such information as the Secretary may require.

20 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
21 authorized to be appropriated, such sums as may be nec-
22 essary to carry out this section.

1 **SEC. 3. INCREASING THE DOMESTIC SUPPLY OF NURSES**
2 **AND PHYSICAL THERAPISTS.**

3 (a) Not later than January 1, 2008, the Secretary
4 of Health and Human Services, in conjunction with the
5 Secretary of Education, shall—

6 (1) submit to Congress a report concerning the
7 source of newly licensed nurses and physical thera-
8 pists in each State, that shall include—

9 (A) for the most recent 3-year period for
10 which data is available—

11 (i) separate data relating to teachers
12 at institutions of higher education for each
13 related occupation who have been teaching
14 for not more than 5 years; and

15 (ii) separate data relating to all teach-
16 ers at institutions of higher education for
17 each related occupation regardless of
18 length of service;

19 (B) for the most recent 3-year period for
20 which data is available, separate data for each
21 related occupation and for each State;

22 (C) a description of the barriers to increas-
23 ing the supply of nursing faculty, domestically
24 trained nurses, and domestically trained phys-
25 ical therapists;

1 (D) separately identify those individuals
2 receiving their initial nursing license and those
3 individuals licensed by endorsement from an-
4 other State;

5 (E) with respect to those individuals re-
6 ceiving their initial nursing license in each year,
7 a description of the number of individuals who
8 received their professional education in the
9 United States and the number of individuals
10 who received such education outside the United
11 States;

12 (F) to the extent practicable, a description,
13 by State of residence and country of education,
14 of the number of nurses and physical therapists
15 who were educated in any of the 5 countries
16 (other than the United States) from which the
17 most nurses and physical therapists arrived;

18 (G) recommendations of strategies to be
19 utilized by Federal and State governments that
20 would be effective in removing the barriers de-
21 scribed in subparagraph (C), including strate-
22 gies that address barriers to advancement to
23 become registered nurses for other health care
24 workers, such as home health aides and nurses
25 assistants;

1 (H) recommendations for amendments to
2 Federal laws that would increase the supply of
3 nursing faculty, domestically trained nurses,
4 and domestically trained physical therapists;

5 (I) recommendations for Federal grants,
6 loans, and other incentives that would provide
7 increases in nurse educators and nurse training
8 facilities, and other measures to increase the
9 domestic education of new nurses and physical
10 therapists;

11 (J) identify the effects of nurse emigration
12 on the health care systems in their countries of
13 origin; and

14 (K) recommendation for amendments to
15 Federal law that would minimize the effects of
16 health care shortages in the countries of origin
17 from which immigrant nurses arrived;

18 (2) enter into a contract with the Institute of
19 Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences for
20 the conduct of a study, and submission of a report,
21 to determine the level of Federal investment under
22 titles VII and VIII of the Public Health Service Act
23 (42 U.S.C. 292 and 296 et seq.) that is necessary
24 to eliminate the domestic nursing and physical ther-
25 apist shortage by the date that is not later than 7

1 years after the date on which the report is sub-
 2 mitted; and

3 (3) collaborate with the heads of other Federal
 4 agencies, as appropriate, in working with ministers
 5 of health or other appropriate officials of the 5 coun-
 6 tries from which the most nurses and physical thera-
 7 pists arrived into the United States, to—

8 (A) address health worker shortages
 9 caused by emigration; and

10 (B) ensure that there is sufficient human
 11 resource planning or other technical assistance
 12 needed to reduce further health worker short-
 13 ages in such countries.

14 **SEC. 4. SHORTAGE OCCUPATIONS.**

15 (a) EXCEPTION TO DIRECT NUMERICAL LIMITA-
 16 TIONS.—Section 201(b)(1) of the Immigration and Na-
 17 tionality Act (8 U.S.C. 1151(b)(1)) is amended by adding
 18 at the end the following new subparagraph:

19 “(F)(i) During the period beginning on the
 20 date of the enactment of the Rural Nursing
 21 Promotion Act and ending on September 30,
 22 2017, an alien—

23 “(I) who is described in section
 24 203(b); and

1 “(II) who is seeking admission to
2 the United States to perform labor in
3 shortage occupations designated by
4 the Secretary of Labor for certifi-
5 cation under section 212(a)(5)(A) due
6 to the lack of sufficient United States
7 workers able, willing, qualified, and
8 available for such occupations and for
9 which the employment of aliens will
10 not adversely affect the terms and
11 conditions of similarly employed
12 United States workers.

13 “(ii) During the period described in
14 clause (i), the spouse or dependent of an
15 alien described in clause (i), if accom-
16 panying or following to join such alien.”.

17 (b) EXCEPTION TO NONDISCRIMINATION REQUIRE-
18 MENTS.—Section 202(a)(1)(A) of the Immigration and
19 Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1152(a)(1)(A)) is amended by
20 striking “201(b)(2)(A)(i)” and inserting “201(b)”.

21 (c) EXCEPTION TO PER COUNTRY LEVELS FOR FAM-
22 ILY-SPONSORED AND EMPLOYMENT-BASED IMMI-
23 GRANTS.—Section 202(a)(2) of the Immigration and Na-
24 tionality Act (8 U.S.C. 1152(a)(2)), is amended by insert-

1 ing “, except for aliens described in section 201(b),” after
2 “any fiscal year”.

3 (d) PROCEDURE FOR GRANTING IMMIGRANT STA-
4 TUS.—Section 204 of the Immigration and Nationality
5 Act (8 U.S.C. 1154) is amended by adding at the end the
6 following new subsection:

7 “(l) The Secretary of Homeland Security shall pro-
8 vide a process for reviewing and making a determination
9 upon a petition filed with respect to an alien described
10 in section 201(b)(1)(F) not later than 30 days after the
11 date a completed petition has been filed for such alien.”.

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